

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 4, 2009

The Honorable Jeff Bingaman  
Chairman  
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Bingaman and Murkowski,

We understand that you intend to introduce legislation to implement a national renewable electricity standard. As you think about how to transition our nation toward cleaner energy production, we urge you to consider including less-traditional, but nonetheless effective, non-fossil fuel energy sources – like waste-to-energy – in your bill's definition of the term "renewable."

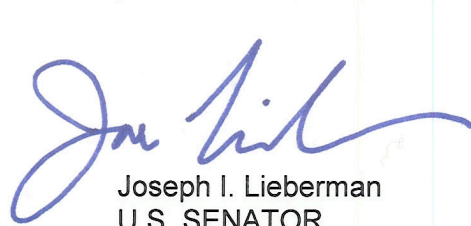
Waste-to-energy can provide double benefits: it diminishes waste reserves and produces clean energy while offsetting greenhouse gas emissions. As our nation's energy needs grow and we continue to discern how best to meet them, we think it is important to take an inclusive view of the ways in which already-existing technologies can be used to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels.

The nation's 87 waste-to-energy facilities safely manage approximately 29 million tons of household refuse each year, and they have an electric capacity of 2,700 megawatts. Each one operates pursuant to environmentally rigorous Maximum Achievable Control Technology (MACT) standards. Through the combustion of waste that would have otherwise been landfilled, these facilities decrease our reliance on fossil-fuel fired electric generation.

Waste-to-energy is already considered a renewable energy source by states across the country and nations around the world. For that reason and the ones articulated above, we urge you to consider including waste-to-energy in your bill's definition of the term "renewable."

This Congress, we have an opportunity to promote the development of clean, renewable energy sources that will simultaneously reduce our dependence on foreign oil and curb our nation's greenhouse gas emissions while creating jobs and supporting American technological innovation. It would only help us meet our clean energy production goals to think broadly about what types of energy are considered renewable, understanding that stringent environmental standards must remain paramount in any such assessment. We look forward to working with you to accomplish that task.


Sincerely,



Joseph I. Lieberman  
U.S. SENATOR

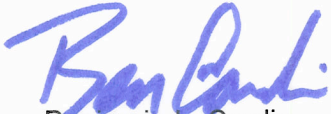


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U.S. SENATOR



Daniel K. Akaka  
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Waste-to-energy 3/4/2009


  
Benjamin L. Cardin  
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Robert P. Casey, Jr.  
U.S. SENATOR

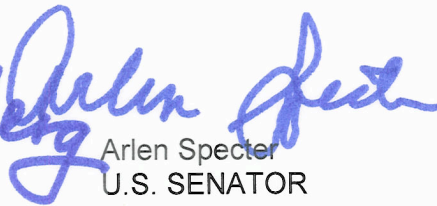
  
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